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ABSTRACT

Thirty literacy practitioners participated in a free-ranging discussion of the potential and the issues arising from the rapid introduction of new technologies to literacy education (adult basic education and English language training). After an introduction, the report includes the presentations of various participants, including Peter Goulding, Coordinator of CoSy/AlphaCom Ontario; Jim Bizzocchi, chair of the standing committee on educational technology; Patti Barnes, librarian at Northwest Community College; and Raymonde Jabaji, an instructional assistant at Vancouver Community College. The next section discusses issues and topics of interest identified by participants. These include philosophy, building community, instructional applications, and professional development. The third section focuses on the important next steps to take, and the final section is an epilogue by Audrey Thomas. Appended materials include results of the meeting, services and projects in British Columbia, a glossary of terms, and a list of the participants. (JL) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Literacy and New Technologies

An event hosted by the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour

June 1-2, 1995

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Literacy and New Technologies

An event hosted by the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour

June 1-2, 1995
Richmond, B.C.

Report prepared by Patty Bossort, Adult Education Consultant

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Acknowledgements

The success of the Literacy and New Technologies Event was due to the cooperation and assistance of many groups and people. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

The B.C. Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour (MSTL), Developmental Programs, sponsored the event. The Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. (ABEABC) graciously contributed extra funds from a previously funded Adult Literacy Cost Shared Project to provide additional support for the event. Literacy cost shared projects are funded through the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) and MSTL.

Brigid Hayes and Adrian Papanek from the National Literacy Secretariat provided organizational advice and the draft report from the National Policy Conversation on New Technologies and Literacy.

Dennis Anderson and Judy Wilbee from the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development contributed their process design skills and talents to facilitate the event.

Peter Goulding of George Brown College in Toronto contributed his time and expertise to initiate and monitor the CoSy/AlphaCom experiment with on-line communication and networking prior to the event.

Jim Bizzocchi, Chair of the Standing Committee on Educational Technology, helped us to understand some of the technological options available in B.C. and the vocabulary we needed.

Randy Bruce, Dean of Information and Educational Technology at Kwantlen College, provided access to an Internet account for the two days and loaned us equipment needed to demonstrate CoSy and the World Wide Web.

All of the participants in the event contributed materials, experience and analysis to support the conversation.

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Introduction

On June 1 and 2, 1995 thirty literacy practitioners, met in Richmond to participate in a free-ranging discussion of the potential and the issues arising from the rapid introduction of new technologies to literacy education. The term literacy is being used in its very broadest sense to include Adult Basic Education and English Language Training.

The participants were invited because of their known expertise with some aspect of 'new' technology as well as their expertise in or commitment to literacy work in the province. The participants came from different constituencies and a variety of geographic regions in the province. As well, Peter Goulding, coordinator of an electronic communications network (CoSy/AlphaCom) for the province of Ontario was invited to contribute his experience in the operation and development of that system.

Invitation from Audrey Thomas, Provincial Literacy Coordinator

In January of this year I was part of a national conversation hosted by the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) in Montreal on the topic of Literacy and the New Technologies. That event was attended by 27 people from different parts of Canada. The focus was on 'conversation' with a view to informing potential policy development within the NLS on this topic.

The event was stimulating and I came away with the desire to initiate a similar event in British Columbia. The use of technology in instruction, and the future use of information technologies are issues with which some practitioners have been grappling for some time. The efforts, however, are sporadic and, in our field of Developmental Programs, not linked together in any organized way. We all have bits of the picture, but we do not have the provincial picture... If the field of Developmental Programs is not to be left behind, it needs to start positioning itself to take

advantage of the new electronic technologies which may include the Internet, interactive-video and such like.

Some key questions are:

- What new technologies are currently in place and how are they being used?
- What can the new technologies do for practitioners and learners; what are their limitations?
- Where do we want to be in the future? Where do we place the emphasis -on instructional processes, on networking and communicating?
- What are the issues? How accessible is the Internet? What are the hardware and software requirements? What are the training needs? What are the implications for good practice?

Goals of the event

> *"I am hoping to better understand the positive possibilities of technology in enhancing literacy development. I am prepared to be convinced that programs can be more than workbooks on a screen, e-mail can be more than massive junk mail, and that the 'new technologies' do in fact improve the quality of life in our communities"*
>
> *a participant*

Technology has become part of our educational programs and collegial relationships. We must think about and take charge of what we want from technology to support and enhance quality educational programming and networking in British Columbia for learners and practitioners. Therefore, the goals of the event were:

- to initiate some synergistic networking throughout the province
- to encourage participants to return to their respective organizations and talk to colleagues and generate interest in continuing this dialogue
- if appropriate, to form a working or steering committee to help initiate and develop projects, programs, and to continue the dialogue on issues.

Pre-Event Questionnaire

Prior to the event participants responded to a brief questionnaire describing the topics which interested them most and the issues they were thinking about. Instructional applications and communication and electronic networking were of most concern. There was also considerable interest in the uses and applications of database resources.

Questions were raised about:

- student access to the Internet
- applications which invite and support student learning
- access to the hardware needed
- access to appropriate advice for purchase of software and hardware
- the best set up for electronic networking (listserves, e-mail, closed conferencing, etc.)
- the information and systems which can be best used to assist people in the use of Applied Academics

Suggestions for development were:

- set up a B.C. Web site for educators with a BC Home page
- build a technology mediated learning community
- establish synergistic relationships with our colleagues

Pre-Event CoSy Experiment

Several weeks prior to the event, Peter Goulding and Audrey Thomas arranged for the participants to explore the possibilities available for electronic networking by "camping" on the CoSy system for awhile. Peter set up a closed conference called BCNet/Conversation.

About two-thirds of the group had the necessary prerequisite access to e-mail and telnet. Peter acted as a resource person and moderator, trouble-shooting difficulties some of us had in gaining access, comprehending the menu and keeping the dialogue going. Those who participated found the experience enlightening.

Participants also were given the opportunity to join any of the open conferences currently in progress in Ontario. Possible conference topics included learners, professional development, distance education and policy development.

Presentations

Peter Goulding, Coordinator, CoSy/AlphaCom Ontario

Peter is a faculty member at George Brown College. He taught ESL for 17 years and directed teacher training. Since 1987 Peter has worked at the Computers and Learning Centre of George Brown College. Originally the Centre provided consultation for computer-assisted learning. Presently Peter guides the design and operation of the AlphaCom communications network for the province's literacy community. His publications include an annotated bibliography of commercial software aimed at low to mid-level literacy students.

AlphaCom is a computer network in Ontario linking literacy providers throughout the province and in various program sectors: community-based, college and school district. The system provides open and closed conferencing and e-mail, and includes information about services and participants and extensive on-line help.

Eight years ago the literacy branch in Ontario under the direction of Betty Butterworth initiated the AlphaCom system for community-building, communication and professional development for literacy practitioners and learners. AlphaCom is part of an Ontario literacy infrastructure which includes four components: AlphaCom; Alpha Ontario, a provincial resource base; AlphaBase, a provincial database; and regional desktop publishing services to create and publish materials free or at minimal cost.

The AlphaCom network started with a pilot of six programs, and today there are over 400 sites connected, usually with multiple users at each site. The project's original mandate was to connect all the community-based programs throughout the province and the latest programs to come on are the 44 francophone literacy programs in the province.

AlphaCom is located at George Brown College in Toronto and staffed by four full-time teacher/consultants, one full-time technologist and one full-time support person. The project has set up a system of local trainers or mentors both paid and volunteer. Funding is provided by the Ontario government and the National Literacy Secretariat.

One of the benefits of AlphaCom is the democratization of information and, consequently, of the field itself. The system works to build community through communication. It offers an opportunity to use electronic communication for planning and strategizing for growth and development, as well as for political purposes. It also offers an opportunity for learners to get involved on-line in discussions about relevant issues.

We need.....
"continued development in this area to provide equitable access to the diverse communities in B.C."

a participant

Electronic conferences available to practitioners and learners include discussions of professional development, distance education, planning, facilitation, and political processes. As well there are user groups carrying on day-to-day business: these include groups such as workplace literacy, native literacy and deaf literacy; geographic groups; and special interest groups such as rural literacy and family literacy providers.

The project is exploring ways that could connect users to the Internet under existing financial constraints. In the interim, AlphaCom is acting as a conduit for information posted on the Internet.

Later in the day Peter gave an on-line demonstration of AlphaCom.

Jim Bizzocchi, Chair Standing Committee on Educational Technology (SCOET)

Jim has been an instructor in the Media Resources Program at Capilano College since 1971. He has been active in instructional media, distance education and educational technology. As chair of SCOET he is involved in advising the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour and the Council of Chief Executive Officers on the implementation of educational technology into B.C.'s colleges and institutes.

Technology is not an educational panacea. It is useful only insofar as it serves the learning process. The key to any effective learning process is instructional design. Instructional design is a process to integrate all the key learning variables into one plan. The plan should include such variables as: content, instructional goals, learner characteristics, learning environment, instructional support, evaluation process, and delivery method. Note that technology falls within the last category (delivery method), and should be determined by the imperatives of the previous categories.

ABE programs lead the field of adult education because they are often the most focused on learner needs as the starting point for development of programs and curriculum.

Telecommunications can be used to provide direct instruction, instructional support, professional development and to support organizational and coordination activities. We have been using audio or teleconferencing and satellite video conferencing for several years now. These are reliable and familiar options. Newer options include interactive video conferencing and computer communications.

SCOET's mandate is to give advice on policy and strategic direction related to educational technology for the college and institutes system. SCOET is working to help make our colleges operate more as a system. It is a small organization (10 volunteers plus Jim and 2 research assistants). Therefore, there are severe limits to how much direct support SCOET can provide. However, they will certainly try to help with some follow-up arising from this meeting.

We need....."to establish synergistic relationships with our colleagues, to develop a plan for the implementation of new technologies in ABE."

a participant

I need.....

"to learn about existing technological and electronic resources currently available in B.C. (for both educators and students) and discuss the possibility for the development in B.C. of an electronic system like CoSy, but with more open conferences and definitely with Internet access."

a participant

"It seems to me that some direction has been given to the Ministry and that we resource people will be carrying this stuff forward. I hope for continued global awareness of activity in other communities and everyone connecting up."

a participant

All colleges and school districts have access to Internet, except Northern Lights College which is in the process of connecting. The college system has not yet set up such a system-wide conferencing network such as AlphaCom. However, interested individuals have been connecting through e-mail. There is wide variation in accessibility of computer equipment within the college system. A minority of faculty have Internet at their desks. School districts, however, have been linked through a Ministry of Education sponsored network called the Community Learning Network (CLN) which includes conferencing capabilities similar to AlphaCom, plus e-mail, tutorials, and direct Internet access. These services are available to individual school districts.

A consortium of 5 ministries, (Skills, Training and Labour, Education, Transportation and Highways, Municipal Affairs, and Employment and Investment) have been working on establishing a Provincial Learning Network. If this is done the province could then, as a unified consumer, negotiate better deals with the community of telecommunications vendors for a comprehensive educational telecommunications infrastructure.

With respect to computer communications systems, there are two types of systems to consider: the menu driven type like CoSy uses and a windows-based type such as First Class. Within each system one should look for several communications options: e-mail, list serves, closed conferencing, gopher, World Wide Web.

User groups are an excellent method for colleagues to support mutual development in educational technology. In BC there are already two active ed tech users groups (video conferencing and computer mediated communications). The video conferencing users group has met three times, and includes about 3/4 of the colleges, institutes, the universities, the Open Learning Agency (OLA), Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development (CCPD), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour, and some school boards. The computer mediated communications users group has only met once. It has people from about half the colleges/institutes plus three of the universities, OLA, and MSTL

QUESTIONS

How can we get involved with a users group?

To get involved with the user group, you may contact the SCOET office for information.

How do we get current information about technologies and education?

Contact the SCOET office for general information on ed tech initiatives in the college system. In addition, every college/institute

has a 'Champion of Educational Technology' who works with SCOET. SCOET uses the college/institute Champion as an initial contact to receive and distribute information. The Champion passes the SCOET request to the individual in each institution best able to provide the particular information.

What is SCOET doing about professional development?

Professional development for college faculty is a key part of the SCOET plan. There are three immediate priorities for professional development: instructional design, telecommunications, and basic computer literacy. There are approximately a half dozen projects being developed to meet needs in these three areas. Contact the SCOET office for more information.

"I'd like to help build a technology mediated learning community"

a participant

What can we do for professional development for community groups?

It is difficult to give a precise answer. SCOET is only responsible for colleges. Colleges are being encouraged to create community partnerships. Community groups should approach their college and capitalize on this. Libraries are all linked electronically and may be able to play a key role as resources.

How can we get more information about SCOET?

To contact SCOET call 604-356-7662 or Fax 604-387-9142. or e-mail to harby@camosun.bc.ca.

Watch for information on the SCOET sponsored conference, CONNECTIONS '96, May 9, 10, 11, 1996, to be held in Vancouver.

Jim thanked the group for the opportunity to meet with them.

Patti Barnes, Librarian, Northwest Community College

Patti began tutoring literacy learners as a volunteer in 1987. As a board member of Project Literacy Terrace, Patti was instrumental in creating and managing the establishment of a northern regional literacy collection. Patti is a member of the NWCC Regional Literacy Advisory Committee.

Northwest Community College and Project Literacy Terrace have created a northern and rural literacy collection that is available to the college and community. Community access has been established for on-line search.

In 1990 Northwest Community College and Project Literacy Terrace became interested in how to get resources to the smaller communities in their region. The college already had a network and database set up. The two groups applied to the Adult Literacy Cost Shared Fund for money to build and catalogue a literacy collection that would focus on northern, rural, and native literacy needs.

They acquired materials from published and unpublished sources. The collection emphasizes materials with native, rural and northern

themes. Materials can be borrowed by learners, instructors, tutors and tutor-trainees throughout the region either as individual items or as a packaged kit. Resources include print materials, audio tapes, videotapes and class sets of training materials. The college is committed to replacing and adding to the collection now that it is established.

Anyone living in northern B.C. can use the collection for free. Access is through a combined catalogue (called Outlook) on a CD ROM database available at any NWCC Learning Resource Centre or public library. Or you can access the catalogue 'on-line' from your own PC and modem. Access through: datapac address 65100028, Username: NWCAT; or, through telnet at noradm.nwcc.bc.ca Username: NWCAT. Anyone can conduct on-line searches locally and provincially.

Raymonde Jabaji, Instructional Assistant, Vancouver Community College

Raymonde is a LAN System Operator at Vancouver Community College, ESL Vocational Department. She has over 10 years of experience in instructional computing. Her experience with computer - assisted instruction led to her being hired to research and write the Computer Assisted Language Learning Guide for ESL Instructors at Post-Secondary Institutes in B.C., 1994

The *Computer Assisted Language Learning Software Guide for ESL Instructors* is a useful annotated listing of currently used software for instructional purposes in both ESL programs and Literacy programs.

The *Guide* was the product of a provincially initiated curriculum project for the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour and the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development. The project surveyed LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) providers and public post-secondary institutions in B.C. to determine the extent of computers and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) software used in the province.

The *Guide* reflects the findings of the surveys in the area of computer integration into ESL/ABE instruction, and defines computing strategies for use with ESL and ABE classes at a range of levels. It also features a wide range of CALL software for the ESL and Literacy programs.

Raymonde pointed out that the software technology is a tool that should be utilized as a supplement to other instructional media, and not as a replacement. The best software programs are the ones that offer authoring capabilities, thus allowing instructors to "tailor-make" lessons or stories so the relationship between the computer material and classroom material is clear to the students. The project viewed CALL as a valuable and effective adjunct to classroom instruction, and best for "review" and "reinforcement" of classroom work, for independent study, remedial work, and to introduce new course material.

The CALL software featured in the *Guide* fall into three major groups:

(1) Language Skills Programs, such as: grammar, spelling, text manipulation/reconstruction, vocabulary, punctuation and proofreading, reading, pronunciation, language games, life skills and simulation programs. The most popular software are those that offer multi-media possibilities.

(2) General Support Applications that do not teach language per se, but make language learning easier or better such as: word processing, prewriting and writing programs, typing tutors and concordancing programs.

"I can report back to my institution and hopefully motivate instructors to participate in training events, and incorporate technology in their classrooms"

a participant

(3) Instructor Utilities that are used to produce class materials and/or develop individual applications and integrated learning systems, such as: authoring programs, authoring systems and crossword puzzle generators.

The *Guide* also details hardware requirements; software strengths and weaknesses based on hands-on experience with the software; software rating; and provides instructors with computer tips. There is a software checklist for quick reference, a list of software publishers and suppliers, a glossary of computer terminology, and a list of CALL resources. The *Guide* may help literacy instructors in the selection and acquisition of CALL software.

The *Guide* is available for purchase from the Open Learning Agency Marketing Department, order number VA0158. Call 1-800-663-1653 or (604) 431-3210 in Burnaby.

On Friday, Martin Buck of Camosun College gave a presentation on the World Wide Web and provide an opportunity for participants to try it out.

Topics of Interest

The group identified issues and topics which were of interest or concern to them. Because time was limited, we were not able to address all of the group's concerns. However, it is important to keep them in mind for future discussions on education and technology. The topics we decided to address during the event fell into the following categories: philosophy, building community, instructional applications, and professional development. Small groups met to discuss the issue and returned to the plenary with the following thoughts on the subjects.

Philosophy

"Good practice" has been very important to literacy and ESL providers. These principles must be kept firmly in mind while developing new technologically supported aspects to programs and networking. This working group made the following statements:

- MSTL must develop, promote and support policy regarding "good practice" and the use of technology.
- The communication skills necessary to talk on-line effectively are the same ones needed to develop in face-to-face social situations. These must be practiced first in order to use them on-line.
- We must develop instructional design of particular classes, programs, and departments **first** and then decide what thrust technologies will play in this.
- We must first practice with technology ourselves in order to have creative ideas about how to use it in instructional design.
- Computer skills are valued by society. Literacy students have the right to "join the club" as **part** of their educational experience.
- There is much concern in the literacy field regarding the purchase of expensive technology instead of (as opposed to in addition to) "on the ground expertise". There is concern that the purchase of technologies will absorb large proportions of budgets replacing instructors.

"It was an excellent learning process for me. I am proud to be part of a technology group to foster introduction and implementation of new technologies in the province."

Building Community

Electronic communication offers new possibilities for communicating, networking and building community. Listserves, e-mail, conferencing, and interactive video all offer unique features for supporting communication between practitioners, learners, institutions, committees, and programs. The group discussing this topic made the following statements:

- We must be open to building partnerships and expanding ourselves beyond our own programs without "threatening" the territory or jurisdictions of others. This will create community outside our present structures. These new communities will build and define themselves as they evolve.
- Reliance on telecommunications systems for learner networking may be problematic for some learners because it is reading and writing based, requiring those skills as well as some technical skills to participate.
- We need to equip and provide access points for learners and practitioners. Access points are becoming universally available through freenets and commercial servers. The gateway is less of an issue than access to the hardware necessary to use them.
- B.C. libraries are possible access points. They are connected through 8 freenets in the province. School districts are also connected through the CLN (Community Learning Network).
- Standards should be set for development of hardware and software so that they are compatible.
- Institutions will have to establish guidelines and policy monitoring quantity and quality of learner access to the Internet. Presently some colleges are providing access and others are not.
- Technical support must be provided for learners and practitioners who want to use these systems.
- We have access to the Internet throughout the province. How do we decide how best to use it or another system such as AlphaCom to accomplish our goals? It is important that more of us gain an understanding of the choices so that we can make informed decisions about developing a provincial networking system.
- Any system will require a moderator or animator or facilitator to help get people involved, keep the quality of the content interesting and useful, and keep the system and content current to the needs of learners and the field.

I hope we will develop...."projects that will advance the use of technology in the province and across Canada."

a participant

Instructional Applications

Computer technology can be a tool which will enhance curriculum and program design. However, principles of good practice must remain the guide in developing the use of technologies in the classroom. This discussion group had the following to offer:

- When planning to purchase and use computer-assisted learning programs make time to observe the use of it in a classroom first. These programs are expensive and not all are appropriate in your setting. Some only have commercially written content; others allow you to author your own materials if you have sufficient time. We need to keep a list of users throughout the province so that it will be easy to find places to observe and try equipment and programs in place.
- We need a software guide, annotated by users of the product. Any software guide created will need to be updated regularly due to the rapidly changing possibilities.
- An electronic discussion group should be created to discuss the pros and cons and creative and effective uses. Through such a means we could be sharing customized resources on-line.
- Information must be shared within ministries as well as between the ministries responsible for literacy and ELT.
- Learners must have the opportunity to become technically literate so that they leave programs with some understanding of electronic information technology, not just how to navigate through a particular system. Learners should have the opportunity to learn skills such as keyboarding, word processing, e-mail, electronic search, etc. No one piece of software was listed because the technology is changing so rapidly. It is better that the learner have a broad understanding of electronic information management, whether it be using a database, the Internet or whatever.
- Before effective use in the classroom can be expected from practitioners, training must be provided. On-the-job time must be allotted for this professional development.
- There must be cooperation across the government ministries. Services should be available to all adult education providers.
- We must influence the creators of software to provide programs with Canadian and racially relevant curriculum.

"I'm impressed. Convenors picked up on direction of interests of the group. Changes were made to the schedule, focus on group interests. Lots of information."

a participant

- Many literacy and ELT practitioners have new literacy needs in the area of technology. We need our own workplace literacy programs.
- Implementation of policy and guidelines for purchase and development are needed immediately.

Professional Development

Professional Development is fundamental to developing good practice, appropriate and effective instructional applications and electronic community building. Without time allocated to developing effective training for practitioners, we will not adequately understand the choices, uses or possibilities that new technologies offer.

- All professional development regarding technology must include discussions on values and principles of education.
- Professional development in technology should be placed in the context of providing the best quality experience for learners.
- An interest group should be formed to consider ways of developing and delivering professional development about technology and using technology as a delivery method.
- We need to establish a mentor system within each program, so that answers to technical questions can be provided in short order.
- We need easily accessible, cross discipline and inter- program opportunities for professional development. It should be available, affordable and of high quality.
- We need computer consultants who are well informed about our field to assist in making decisions about purchase and effective use of new and old hardware and software. Our use of technology should be integrated with education as a whole.
- Professional development activities should fit the "needs of the audience." Some will profit most from several one-to-one sessions with a technical tutor; others from group workshops.
- Institutions offering professional development for their faculties should invite the community to participate.

"My lack of knowledge was frustrating -- but I will make a point of changing this. It will be the focus for the better half of 1995."

a participant

Practical Next Steps

During the final afternoon the participants considered what they thought were the more important next steps to take.

Most Popular Ideas

1. Extend the 'experiment' with AlphaCom for a while longer and encourage others to participate in the conferencing as a way to continue this dialogue and share other needs and ideas.
2. Provide professional development for practitioners regarding technology and its applications. Professional development activities should include regional workshops, one-to-one coaching and provincial sessions.
3. Create and keep current an annotated users guide for software.
4. Investigate sources of surplus hardware and establish ways to make it available.
5. Provide technical support and advice services provincially through a 1-800 number. Advice is needed on how to decide what to purchase, appropriate and creative uses for hardware and software already available, and referrals to local 'mentors' who could answer individual questions about applications.
6. Establish a working committee to develop good practice principles to encompass the use of new technologies in literacy programming.
7. Provide funds to support a technical support person at each institution who would provide professional development activities, answer individual questions, and trouble shoot problems.
8. Establish a mentoring system so that we can help each other learn and solve problems.

> *"I learned a lot conceptually, technically and practically. I feel much better prepared to be a resource for others."*
>
> *a participant*

English Language Training

1. Develop professional development events focused on ELT and technology that could possibly be delivered at ELT Articulation Committee Meetings, BC TEAL (Teachers of

English as an Additional Language) events or in different regions in the province.

2. Encourage all groups (Deans and Directors of Developmental Studies, Articulation Committee, Department meetings, etc.) to add regular discussions about technology to their agendas.
3. The ELT Articulation Committee may wish to establish a standing committee on technology.
4. Establish a B.C. listserve for ELT practitioners.
5. Identify an ELT and technology contact/champion/mentor at each institution

Other ideas to consider

1. Clarify and explore the degree of connectivity available throughout the province.
2. Provide information about B.C. to the AlphaCom users in Ontario.
3. Distribute more information on the Internet.
4. Arrange partnerships with libraries and so facilitate community literacy use of the computer equipment.
5. Start putting government funding applications and information 'on-line.'
6. Establish Home Pages on the World Wide Web for Literacy and English Language Training.

Suggestions for actions we can all take immediately

1. Lots of old equipment is still around in colleges. It's still useful for various things. Keep them, share them, use them.
2. Use the equipment you have now and learn to use it well. Do not wait for professional development funds and opportunities to be available. Young people graduating from high school and college are entering our field with these skills already. We must keep ourselves competitive.

Epilogue by Audrey Thomas

This conversation was only a beginning but, I think, an exciting and stimulating event. We had a range of people from across Developmental programs and from different geographic regions. A variety of agencies - colleges, public libraries, aboriginal institutions, the voluntary sector and provincial associations were represented. Participants were ready to learn, to share, to talk, and to have fun in the process.

The immediate goals of the event were met: networking and this report. What happens next will determine the long-term success of this event. I am encouraged by the ABEABC's offer to incorporate literacy and new technologies as a theme for their regional professional development project. I am also encouraged by the offers of a World Wide Web site, an ABE-L provincial listserve, an extension of our use of AlphaCom as well as the determination of some participants who are not yet on-line to take steps for that to happen.

We need more information and debate about the merits, strengths and weaknesses of the various options. We need to keep current with developments. We need to keep the issues of access, costs, training and professional development in mind in any strategic planning of initiatives. If the provincial learning network goes ahead, an improved infrastructure will be available, but we will still need to position our program areas to take advantage of that improved situation. We need to find the true champions in our institutions and search out the computer support people. We need to build our own B.C. networks while, at the same time, being free to interact with our colleagues in other parts of Canada and the world.

I am convinced that lifelong learning and the seamlessness of education are here to stay. As practitioners we must be open to change, but we should not suspend our critical faculties and jump on the latest bandwagon or tool of the marketplace. We must examine the various technological tools, their uses, and their appropriateness for our purposes and those of our learners. I welcome a discussion about good practice guidelines or principles with regard to literacy and technology. I look forward to our continuing dialogue on the issues and developments in this field.

I thank you all for contributing to this event. I hope you will make 'literacy and new technologies' an agenda item for yourselves and your colleagues. I am especially grateful to our presenters and to our facilitators for being so flexible and good-humored in adapting to our emerging design. I would be remiss if I did not also thank Patty Bossort for so capably organizing this event and preparing this report. It has been a delight to work with her. Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Devron Gaber and Norma Kidd of our branch in the Ministry for so readily encouraging this event.

Appendices

Results of the Meeting: Actions and Offers

Many of the participants in their conversation have skills and access to resources which they have been willing to offer to the province. The following are results of the ideas which emerged from the Literacy and New Technologies event.

Home Page on the World Wide Web

Carleton Scott (Scotty), ABE Instructor and Coordinator of Open Learning at Selkirk College, has offered to set up a Home Page on the World Wide Web for us.

Internet Listserve

Martin Buck, ABE Instructor at Camosun College, has set up a listserve for anyone in the province who wants to participate in an open and free ranging discussion of information and ideas about Adult Basic Education. He has called it ABE-L. This listserve originated as a closed conference at Camosun College for ABE English instructors. To join:

1. send e-mail to: mailserv@camosun.bc.ca
2. leave the subject blank
3. in the body of the message type SUBSCRIBE ABE-L
4. If you have trouble, call Martin:

   e-mail: buck@camosun.bc.ca

   phone 604-370-4913

   fax 604-743-5804

Regional Professional Development Opportunities

The Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. has received literacy cost shared funding to offer a series of professional development events in regions around the province. Marilee Schelp, President of the ABEABC, suggested the Association offer a couple of workshops on creative and appropriate uses of technology and discussions of good practice.

Support and Advice Services

The provincial literacy organization, Literacy B.C. (recently merged with the Adult Literacy Contact Centre) has suggested that they might be an appropriate provider of technical support and advice to the literacy community in B.C. They already have a 1-800 phone number which could be used. Funds will have to be acquired to hire or train staff to provide this technical support and advice.

Services and Projects in B.C.

Services

Adult Literacy Contact Centre (ALCC)

The ALCC (now merged with Literacy B.C.) provides a Directory of Literacy and Adult Basic Education Programs in British Columbia as well as a Directory of Agencies Using Volunteer Tutors in B.C. and a Directory of Training Programs in the Adult Education Field in B.C. Technically, these are not on a database but on a word processing program. The Centre is currently upgrading and redesigning the database and all the directory information will be integrated in the near future.

Through their in-house database, the Centre also provides mailing lists upon request from the literacy field, government, and other non-profit organizations. The principal mailing lists provided are: the B.C. Literacy Cost-Shared Projects distribution list and a list of literacy and/or ABE contacts in B.C. for community colleges, school districts, and community-based programs. These can be provided for the whole province or for one or more community college regions.

Standing Committee on Educational Technology (SCOET)

SCOET is working with partner organizations to develop and facilitate activities that increase the ability of college and institute educators to effectively integrate educational technology into the learning process. For a copy of their publication *Contact*, which showcases educational technology initiatives in the B.C. college and institute system, go to the World Wide Web. Point your browser to: http://www.camosun.bc.ca/scoet/contact.html - For additional information about SCOET projects, reports, and other publications, browse: http://www.camosun.bc.ca/scoet.html

Projects

English Everywhere

is a CD-ROM project being conducted by the Open Learning Agency which focuses on maintaining employment and employment mobility. The four major themes which focus on workplace relations and workplace expectations will be on peer relationships, supervisors/subordinate relationships, client relationships and team work skills. The delivery will be through workplace training centres, community centres and learning centres at post-secondary institutions. OLA is aiming to have a prototype by the end of September and start piloting next January. For more information call Jean Jin, at the Open Learning Agency (604) 431-3000.

Computer Pals Across the World (CPAW)

Computer Pals Across the World is a professional organization of educators and educational and community institutions who encourage computer and international telecommunications networking between learners in countries around the world. The CPAW organization has chapters on every continent except Africa and Antarctica.

The aim of the organization is to provide students with a real context in which they can improve their communication skills; to provide an opportunity for cultural exchange through reading and writing; to motivate the linguistically less interested student; to provide a real-life opportunity for students to develop computer keyboard skills; to familiarize students with the use of international telecommunications; to liberate people from isolation caused by age, physical and emotional handicap and geographical barriers; to assist students in learning other languages; to provide an environment for collaborative study and research; to provide a forum for the dissemination of information on the effective use of telecommunications in education. Contact Carleton Scott for more information. (e-mail: scott@selkirk.bc.ca)

Autoskills

Autoskills is a computer-assisted learning program with research-based reading, designed to provide students of all skill levels and ages with materials, exercises and tests on reading and comprehension. Lynn Hunter, Malaspina College, has worked with the Autoskills program to expand its voice recognition capability. Contact Lynn for more information. (604-755-8744 or e-mail: hunter@mala.bc.ca).

Pilot Project for Computer Conferencing/Tutoring in English Communication

Funding has been applied for through BCIT's Instructional Enhancement Grants. The proposal is to pilot a one-hour a week computer conferencing/tutoring component for an 84 hour, 10.5 week pre-entry communication course (COMM 0004) in the January 1996 term.

EXPECTED PROJECT OUTCOMES OR DELIVERABLES

1. A computer conferencing/tutoring component for COMM 0004.

2. A modified systems orientation training course, which can be used with students needing language support.

3. A report evaluating the results of offering a computer conferencing/tutoring component in an English communication skills course: Did the students learn better and more efficiently? What did they learn better and more efficiently?

4. Seven BCIT instructors trained in the systems orientation and instructional skills required for computer conferencing/tutoring.

Contact Dale Fitzpatrick for more information. (604-451-6896 or e-mail: dfitzpat@bcit.bc.ca).

SARAW (Speech Assisted Reading and Writing)

The development of the SARAW program was funded by the National Literacy Secretariat and the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour in partnership with the Neil Squire Foundation and Capilano College. Digital Computers generously contributed the necessary computers. These have been distributed to selected literacy programs in B.C. and across the country. Contact Pat Hodgson for information. (604-988-5005 or e-mail phodgson@capcollege.bc.ca).

SAM (Speech Assisted Math)

The National Literacy Secretariat will be providing funds for the development of a math component for the SARAW system by Capilano College in fall 1995. This will be a numeracy software package making B.C. ABE Fundamental Math Levels I and II accessible for learners with physical disabilities. The software may also be used by adult learners in general. The completed package will be distributed to the SARAW workstations in Canada.Contact Pat Hodgson for more information. (604-988-5005 or e-mail: phodgson@capcollege.bc.ca).

Inter-line Writing Lab

The Adult Literacy Cost Shared Fund will be supporting Capilano College and the University College of the Fraser Valley in 1995-96 to create a writing community of learners via computer link up. This project will pilot the use of computers to motivate learners to increase their writing fluency through a writing exchange, peer editing, and discussions on-line. Contact Pat Hodgson for more information. (604-988-5005 or e-mail: phodgson@capcollege.bc.ca).

Bridges

Bridges is a software service supplying career/life planning information to students via the Internet and CD ROM disk. Information on careers, skills, trends and opportunities is updated each day by a staff of researchers. Bridges assists students in learning the life skills they need to take advantage of career opportunities. The content has been related to the B.C. Ministry of Education's Career and Personal Planning, grades 8 to 12 learning outcomes. Users pay an annual fee to the system. For more information contact: Mike Martin 604-862-8722, FAX 604-862-8771 or e-mail mmartin@bridges.com.

Global Novel Project

The Selkirk College CPAW organization is sponsoring a global novel project involving students in Finland, Germany, Australia, Canada, Israel, and the United States. The novel is composed of 9 chapters, each written by a different group of students in a different location. The first chapter was written in Alice Springs, Australia. Subsequent chapters were written in Virginia City, Finland, Germany, and Israel. The final chapter will be written in Castlegar, B. C., Canada. All classes will assist in the revision. The novel will be published in hard copy and also posted to a list serve. Call Carleton Scott for more information. (e-mail: scott@selkirk.bc.ca)

West Kootenay Telecommunications Consortium

The West Kootenay Telecommunications Consortium is a group composed of the school districts in the area and Selkirk College, and some business interests who have banded together to arrange for the least expensive and most efficient distribution of telecommunications connectivity in the West Kootenay Area. The members will cooperate and share where possible. Contact: Richard Hallett, hallett@selkirk.bc.ca for more information.

Hyperware (Integrative Software for Adult Language Learners)

This project was designed to provide a sampling of various reading and writing activities that could be created using the Hypercard program which comes with every Macintosh computer. It has been adapted for the IBM as well. The hope is that it will provide the incentive for educators to produce their own software based upon their own and their learners' needs. Contact Maureen Stephens for more information. (604-762-5445).

Database Project

The Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development is developing an electronic database of curriculum and professional development resources to be available to adult educators in the province. The database will provide improved access to the Centre's collection and to materials developed by the colleges, institutes and universities. The vision is a provincial system with centralized data services and decentralized access and provision of resources through lending, electronic communications, copying and publishing. The first pilot database will be available in July 1995. For more information call JoAnne Pasquale at the CCPD (604) 387-9628 or e-mail pasquale@camosun.bc.ca.

NALD (National Adult Literacy Database)

NALD is a resource tool that records literacy programs, services and activities across Canada. It includes libraries, community-based organizations, national and provincial organizations, schools, post-secondary institutions, centres, networks, and research groups. NALD provides the following types of information and services: directories, database inquiries, surveys, statistics, on-line updating, bulletin boards, and electronic mail. There is an annual fee to join. The Adult Literacy Contact Centre has acted as the provincial contact point and trainer for several years. Write to NALD, P.O. Box 4005, London, Ontario N5W 5H1.

Provincial Literacy Resource Centre Study

The goal of this study is to assess the need for a Provincial Literacy Resource Centre and develop recommendations and a model for implementing the Centre. The study was initiated by Literacy B.C. in partnership with the Open Learning Agency and is funded jointly by the National Literacy Secretariat and the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour. The final report of the study will be available in July, 1995.

Rogers Cable

Rogers is starting to provide Internet access to communities and schools.

BC Telephone Co.

BC Tel is working with government to eliminate party lines around the province which will increase access in the rural areas.

Community Access Project

To help provide rural communities with affordable public access to the Internet, as well as the skills to use it effectively, a national network of community access sites will be established to help create new and exciting opportunities for growth and jobs. Through a competitive process, communities will be selected to establish and operate public access sites in low cost public locations, such as schools and libraries, to serve as Information Highway 'on ramps'. The aim of the project is to establish up to 300 centres across Canada annually for three years. Applications must be submitted by Oct. 31, 1995. Contact Industry Canada for more information. Phone 1-800-268-6608 or e-mail comaccess@istc.ca.

Glossary of Terms

A GUIDE TO SOME COMMONLY USED ELECTRONIC ACRONYMS AND TERMS

Archie	Derived from Archive. A database service that tracks the contents of FTP sites all over the world.
ASCII	The American Standard Code for Information Interchange creates a standard for how computer characters are represented.
Backbone	A network of high-speed connections used to route data traffic to slower regional and local networks.
Bandwidth	The size of the data transmission pipeline. Higher bandwidths mean a faster flow of data.
BBS	Bulletin Board System, a small dial-up distribution point for data. Most BBS operations service a local area.
BITNET	An academic network featuring mailing lists on subjects of interest to scholars and field experts.
CALLS	Computer Assisted Language Learning Systems.
CANARIE	The Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry, and Education funds the operation of the backbone network for the Internet in Canada.
CLN	Community Learning Network.
CPAW	Computer Pals Across the World.
Cyberspace	The operating environment of networked computers.
Dial-up User	An individual or an organization who gains access to the Internet through a modem.
Downloading	Copying a file from one computer to another.
E-Mail	Electronic Mail is the sending and receiving of messages over a network (not necessarily the Internet).
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions regarding a particular mailing list or Usenet newsgroup.
Flame	An angry or rude response posted to a newsgroup or mailing list.
FTP	File Transfer Protocol is a tool for moving files from host computers.
Gopher	A tool allowing users to select network resources from an on-screen menu.
HTTP	The Hypertext Transfer Protocol is the communication method used by the World Wide Web.
LAN System	Local Area Network.
Mosaic	A tool allowing access to the World Wide Web using a graphical point-and-shoot interface.
NALD	National Adult Literacy Database.

Netiquette	The etiquette of network use.
Protocol	An agreement on how computers should communicate with one another.
SCOET	Standing Committee on Educational Technology - 604-356-7662 Fax 604-387-9140
Server	A computer providing a data resource on a network.
SLIP	Serial Line Interface Protocol is a connection making it possible for a user to directly access the Internet.
TCP/IP	The Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol regulates how data are moved between computers on the Internet.
Telnet	A protocol used by Internet computers to log on to remote computers. Remote databases are searched using Telnet.
Usenet	A worldwide discussion network on thousands of topics.
Veronica	A tool used to search Gopher menus for particular words or phrases.
World Wide Web	A program displaying hypertext documents, which allows the reader to explore key words in more detail.

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